

# Engagement Summary

Semiahmoo Town Centre Plan  
**STAGE 1 & STAGE 2 (2018-2021)**

*September 1, 2021*

# Building the Plan



## ENGAGING IN SEMIAHMOO

We meaningfully engage to help shape and define our City.

The Semiahmoo Town Centre is the commercial and cultural heart for South Surrey. We are developing a land use plan to help shape the future of the town centre. When finished, the plan will designate what can be built and where. It guides the height, use and look of new buildings and outlines the location and funding for new streets, parks, and other public services.

Stage 1 of the planning process (Getting Started, Exploring Options, and Developing the Plan) was conducted over 2018-2020. Stage 2 (Refining the Plan and Completing the Plan) was underway from 2020 through 2021.

Over the past 4 years, there have been many opportunities for residents and stakeholders to provide input and feedback on the Plan.

This document summarizes the engagement process and staff take-aways throughout the planning process.

This document also highlights some of the outstanding concerns and provides staff responses.

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## HOW WE ENGAGE

### Striking the right balance.

Every land use plan is the summation of three groups' opinions and sometimes competing objectives. Each group provides a valuable lens that cannot be ignored. The resultant plan is better than if it was completed by any one group alone.

#### Everyone has a unique role in **creating the Plan**



##### Staff & Council

Staff and Council align the Plan with established City and inter-municipal policies (e.g. Official Community Plan, Sustainability Charter, and Regional Growth Strategy). The City has committed to these policies, which in turn ensures the City and region are moving towards the same goal.



##### Technical Resources & Experts

Experts provide detailed background studies and professional opinions on everything from traffic, the housing market, public health, biodiversity and more. They provide a quantitative and scientific lens to decision making.



##### The Community

Residents are the local expert. Where technical experts provide objective accounts, residents provide the qualitative, personal, subjective account of the community. They are our best resource for firsthand knowledge.

## INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROCESS

The Surrey Public Engagement Strategy has adopted a modified version of the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation. This approach assumes that all engagement serves to 'inform' and that meaningful engagement aims to consult, involve, collaborate and/or empower, depending on the specific engagement objectives.

Throughout Stage 1 (Step 1-3), engagement falls in the 'Involve' to 'Collaborate' range. In Stage 2 (Steps 4-5), engagement falls in the 'Consult' to 'Involve' range.

#### Stage 1 Level of Engagement Range

#### Stage 2 Level of Engagement Range

	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public Participation Goal	To obtain public feedback on analysis alternatives and/or decision.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the direction.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

## STAKEHOLDER INFLUENCE

The range of interests and influence.

A stakeholder is a person who has something to gain or lose through the outcomes of planning. 'Interest' indicates to what degree they are likely to be affected by the plan. Generally, this is proportional to the amount of time or investment they are willing to make to engagement. The 'influence' each group has on the plan varies throughout the process.

Stakeholders with high influence and high interest are the people or organizations most integral to the planning process. Stakeholders with high interest but low influence need to be consulted with and kept informed. Those with high influence but low interest should be involved in the decision making. All stakeholders play an important role in the process. We offer all stakeholders the opportunity to get involved and provide input.

## STAKEHOLDER MAP



# Engagement Snapshot

## A QUICK LOOK

Over the past 4 years, the plan has been refined through a comprehensive community engagement process. In total, over 2,300 residents and stakeholders have participated by attending workshops, open houses, stakeholder meetings or by completing online surveys. The result is an updated plan that reflects direct resident involvement.

## 4 WAYS RESIDENTS WERE NOTIFIED

			
Newspaper Ads in Peace Arch News and Surrey Now Leader	Mail Postcards sent to area residents and property owners.	Social Media City of Surrey Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter targeted ads for South Surrey residents.	Website City of Surrey Website, E-News, and South Surrey CitySpeaks Panel

## 6 WAYS STAKEHOLDERS PARTICIPATED

		
2 World Cafe Workshops large group dialogue sessions	3 Public Open Houses	7 Online Surveys +1 Youth Survey
		
Stakeholder Meetings and Site Visits	Emails & Phone Calls STCPlan@surrey.ca 604.591.4654	Youth Engagement Online survey administered to Semiahmoo Secondary and Earl Marriott students.

## BY THE NUMBERS

Approximately,

# 34,848

Touchpoints with participants, residents, and stakeholders.  
A touchpoint is an interaction not a person. Very involved residents could be the source of multiple touchpoints.

Completed Surveys

**4,016**

Open House Attendees

**1,040**

Workshop Attendees

**200+**

Emails & Phone Calls

**300+**

Stakeholder Meetings

**30**

Postcard Mail-outs

**29,262**

## ENGAGEMENT AT A GLANCE

### Summary of Community Engagement throughout Stage 1

1: Getting Started	2: Exploring Options	3: Developing the Plan
<b>Objectives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Approach process and residents with an open mind.</li><li>Discuss concerns and desires.</li><li>Explore how the community can evolve over time.</li></ul>	<b>Objectives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Educate on the planning process.</li><li>Build understanding on the foundation for planning: The Interim Plan and Extension Areas Workshop.</li><li>Explore The Big Challenges facing Semiahmoo Town Centre.</li></ul>	<b>Objectives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Present the first draft of the Land Use Plan and 7 Community Values.</li><li>Demonstrate how community values are represented in the Draft Plan.</li><li>Explain what will be presented to Council for Stage 1 approval.</li><li>Educate on the next steps and opportunities for further input/ changes.</li><li>Understand the outstanding concerns and issues to be resolved in the Stage 2 planning process.</li></ul>
<b>Methods:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li> 2 World Cafe Workshops</li><li> Online Survey</li><li> 1-on-1 Emails &amp; Phone Calls</li><li> Stakeholder Meetings</li></ul>	<b>Methods:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li> Public Open House</li><li> Online Survey</li><li> 1-on-1 Emails &amp; Phone Calls</li><li> Stakeholder Meetings</li></ul>	<b>Methods:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li> 2 Public Open Houses</li><li> 2 Online Surveys</li><li> Emails &amp; Phone Calls</li><li> Stakeholder Meetings</li><li> Youth Engagement</li></ul>
<b>Level of Engagement:</b> <p> COLLABORATE</p> <p><i>We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.</i></p>	<b>Level of Engagement:</b> <p> INVOLVE</p> <p><i>We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</i></p>	<b>Level of Engagement:</b> <p> INVOLVE</p> <p><i>We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</i></p>

## ENGAGEMENT AT A GLANCE

### Summary of Community Engagement throughout Stage 2

#### 4: Refining the Plan

##### **Objectives:**

- Connect directly with South Extension Area.
- Understand community architectural character preferences and public amenity opportunities.
- Mitigate outstanding concerns through Urban Design Guidelines.
- Connect with Semiahmoo First Nation.

#### 5: Completing the Plan

##### **Objectives:**

- Share detailed public space (streets & plazas) designs.
- Provide response and rationale where Outstanding Concerns could not be addressed.
- Inform of the final plan contents prior to Council consideration.

##### **Methods:**

 2 Online Surveys

 Stakeholder Meetings

 1-on-1 Emails & Phone Calls

##### **Methods:**

 1 Online Surveys

 Stakeholder Meetings

 1-on-1 Emails & Phone Calls

 Release of Final Plan - *Date TBD*

##### **Level of Engagement:**

INVOLVE

*We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.*

CONSULT

##### **Level of Engagement**

*We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.*

# 1 Engagement Step One

1: GETTING STARTED

2: EXPLORING OPTIONS

3: DEVELOPING THE PLAN

## SUMMER 2018

On July 12th, 2018, the City of Surrey hosted neighbourhood workshops for the two plan extension areas - North and South. Approximately 200 people attended both workshops. Property owners and residents participated in exercises to develop a shared vision for their future neighbourhoods. Common land use themes were created from the discussion and verified in an online survey.

## STEP ONE AT A GLANCE

Objectives	Methods	Outcomes
Approach process and residents with an open mind.	2 World Cafe Workshops	Participants developed five early land use options for each of the extension area neighbourhoods.
Discuss concerns and desires.	Online Survey	
Explore how the community can evolve over time.	Emails & Phone Calls	Staff reconciled the concepts into one preliminary concept plan for each extension area.
	Stakeholder Meetings	

## LIVE GRAPHIC RECORDING

During the workshops participants were asked to share their concerns and desires for the future of their neighbourhoods. Results were captured in this live graphic recording.





## ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

In the weeks following the event participants were asked to complete an online survey. The survey was used to determine residents' priorities and concerns. Participants were asked to prioritize the values, desires and concerns previously generated from the workshops.

Residents most wanted to preserve:



Residents most wanted to enhance:



Residents top concerns were:



## ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

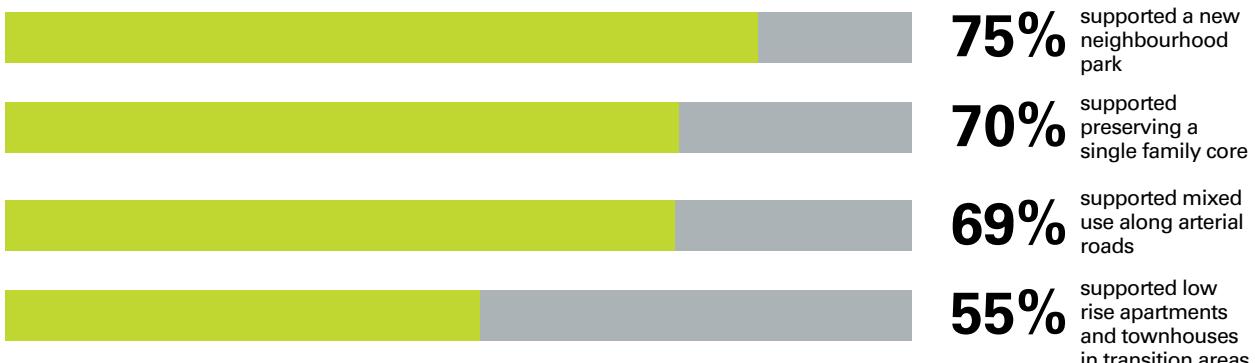
In the workshops, residents were grouped and tasked with exploring potential future land uses through mapping exercises. After the workshop, staff created a preliminary land use concept draft for the North and South Extension Areas. These concepts were based on the commonalities found among the various resident groups.

In the survey, participants were asked to evaluate what they felt about the resultant land use concept.

### The North Extension Area:



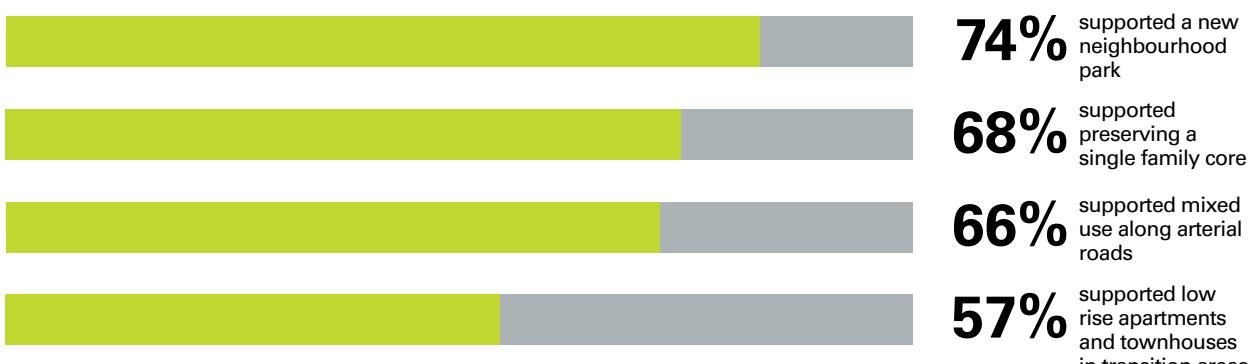
*"Not all families have to live in single-family dwellings."*



### The South Extension Area:



*"Why not have medical services in the same building as shopping centre so seniors can go have a look around after appointments"*



# 2 Engagement Step Two

1: GETTING STARTED

2: EXPLORING OPTIONS

3: DEVELOPING THE PLAN

## WINTER 2019

On February 28, 2019, an open house and online survey were used to introduce participants to the planning process and gather feedback on the big challenges facing Semiahmoo over the next 30 years. Additional stakeholder meetings with community groups and landowners explored land use and development options on a few major sites within the Town Centre.

### STEP TWO AT A GLANCE

Objectives	Methods	Outcomes
Educate on the planning process.	 Public Open House	Participants provided their solutions to tackle the <u><b>Big Challenges</b></u> .
Build understanding on the foundation for planning: <u>The Interim Plan</u> and <u>Extension Areas Workshop</u> .	 Online Survey	Participants' ideas were summarized into seven <u><b>Community Values</b></u> reflected in the Draft Plan.
Explore <u>The Big Challenges</u> facing Semiahmoo Town Centre.	 Emails & Phone Calls  Stakeholder Meetings	



## ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

Participants offered solutions to the Big Challenges:

1

Semiahmoo is growing, and everybody needs a place to call home. Our population is also getting older while household sizes are shrinking.

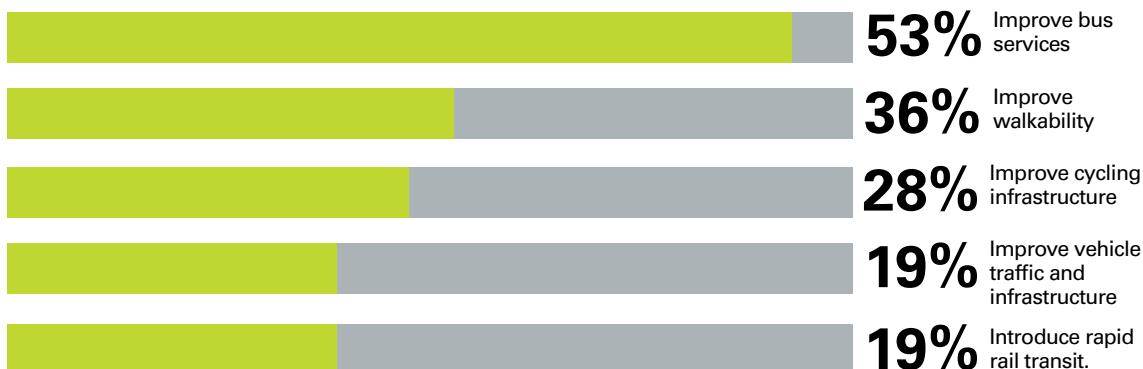
*How would you accommodate a growing population of aging seniors while also making room for young families?* Consider the wide range of economic means and housing needs of different people.



2

We all have places we need to be. Transit ridership is up, a new B-Line is being planned. Traffic is also increasing.

*How would you improve Semiahmoo's transportation network to make sure everyone can get where they want to go, whether they're walking, taking transit or driving?*



3

As a town centre, Semiahmoo should provide the opportunity for residents to live, work and play together.

*What would you like to do in Semiahmoo, but can't? What's missing?*



## EXAMPLE VERBATIM COMMENTS

"Decreasing the distance between homes, shops and services would be great!"

"Mixed use addresses the need for less driving if services and green space are close by"

"Mixed use buildings with retail, medical, community centre amenities at ground level & housing above would be a good use of space."

"Why not have medical services in the same building as shopping centre so seniors can go have a look around after appointments"

"Public gathering spots in the downtown core so people can be drawn to that area to meet and mingle"

"Go taller. But slim buildings with narrow shadows and large gaps between buildings"

"Communities that can house a diversity of ages and incomes are stronger because they provide opportunities for different generations to assist each other"

"Not everyone can afford a house."

"Families need yards, not boxes in the sky."

"Single family housing is not the future."

# 3 Engagement Step Three

1: GETTING STARTED

2: EXPLORING OPTIONS

3: DEVELOPING THE PLAN

## STEP THREE AT A GLANCE

Objectives	Methods	Outcomes
<p>Present the first draft of the Land Use Plan and <u>7 Community Values</u>.</p> <p>Demonstrate how community values are represented in the <u>Draft Plan</u>.</p> <p>Explain what will be presented to Council for Stage 1 approval.</p> <p>Educate on the next steps and opportunities for further input/changes.</p> <p>Build an understanding of the outstanding concerns and issues to be resolved in the Stage 2 planning process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li> 2 Public Open Houses</li><li> 2 Online Surveys</li><li> Emails &amp; Phone Calls</li><li> Stakeholder Meetings</li><li> Youth Engagement</li></ul>	<p>Participants prioritized the <u>Community Values</u> and evaluated how they were reflected in the <u>Draft Plan</u>.</p> <p>Staff re-evaluated the <u>Draft Plan</u> based on feedback.</p> <p>Staff compiled a list of outstanding issues to address in Stage 2 of the planning process.</p>



## SUMMER 2019

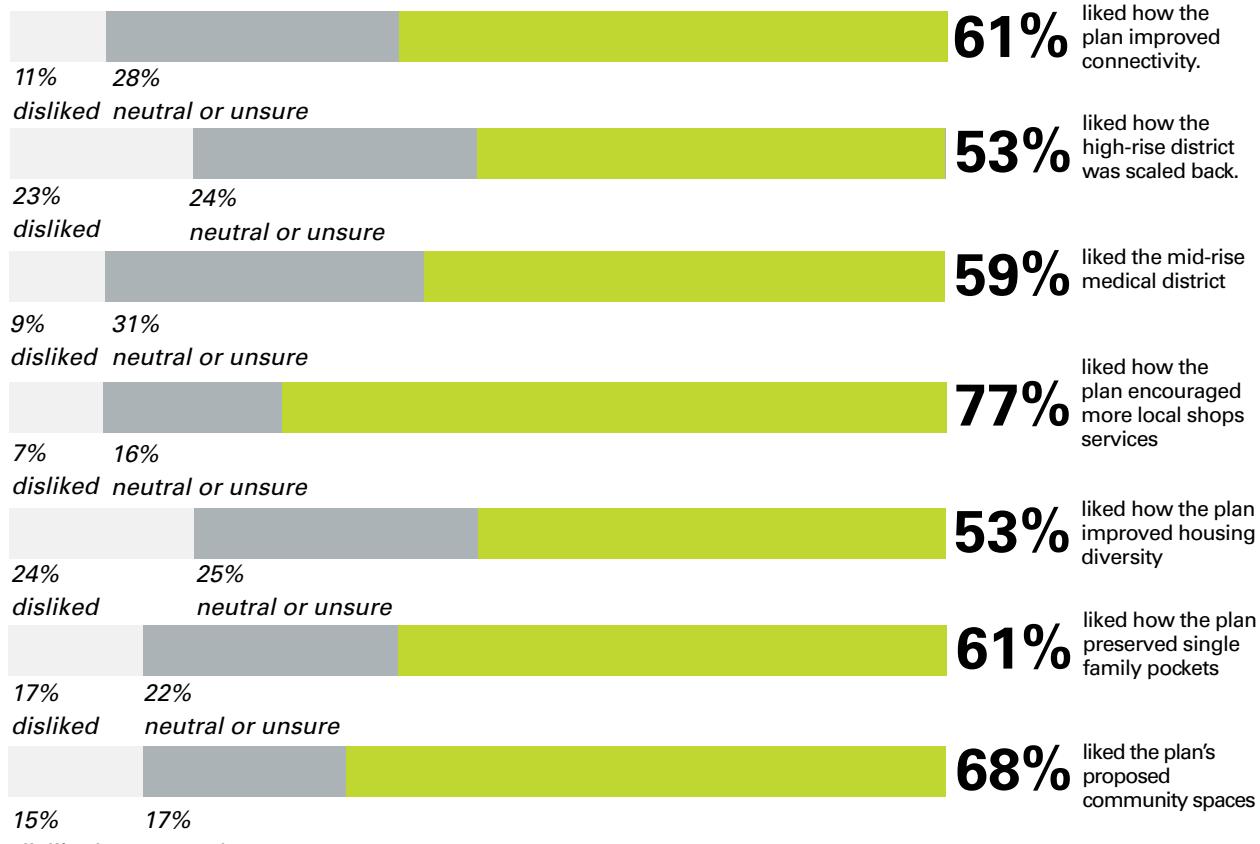
On July 11, 2019, the City of Surrey presented the first draft of the land use plan at a public open house and in an online survey. Participants reviewed how the City had summarized their solutions to the Big Challenges into 7 Community Values. Explanation was provided for how each community value was incorporated into the land use plan.

Community Value	What we heard	What we did
 Improved Connectivity	Many residents were concerned about existing and future traffic congestion and were opposed to a road being constructed through Bakerview Park.	We've added new roads, enhanced bike lanes and sidewalks, and pathways to link neighbourhoods, relieve congestion and improve pedestrian safety and walkability. We've removed the proposed road through Bakerview Park.
 Scaled Back High-Rise District	Many residents expressed opposition to high-rise tower development in the town centre. Concerns included loss of privacy, sunlight and "small town" character.	We limited high-rise development to the area in and around the Semiahmoo Mall, adjacent to the future express bus service. Mid-rise development will be permitted on the periphery.
 Mid-Rise Medical District	Many residents wanted more shops and local medical services. Others were concerned about how taller buildings and additional development will impact adjacent neighbourhoods.	We've added a mixed-use mid-rise district along 16 Avenue to support expansion of medical services near Peace Arch Hospital. This steps down to low-rise and townhouse residential uses and a neighbourhood park.
 More Local Shops and Services	Many residents wanted more local services, shops and meeting places within walking distance.	We introduced new low-rise mixed use along 152 Street and 24 Avenue. These mixed-use developments will have commercial on the ground level and offices and residential above.
 More Housing Types	Residents wanted a wider range of affordable, family and senior-friendly housing types (e.g. townhouses, apartments).	We've included a wider range of residential land uses in the draft plan to support the diverse and changing needs of residents.
 Preserved Single-Family Pockets	Many residents in the extension areas expressed concern about the loss of existing single family neighbourhoods and character. They also want to improve the area with sidewalks, crosswalks and street trees.	We've retained many of the existing single family neighbourhoods in the plan area.
 More Community Spaces	Residents wanted more community and cultural spaces and places to socialize and interact.	We've added four new neighbourhood parks to the plan and are exploring partnership opportunities with developers to construct community amenity spaces for recreation, arts, and culture.



## SURVEY RESULTS - JULY 2019

At the July 2019 open house and in the survey, the draft land use concept was explained in relation to the Community Values.



## EXAMPLE VERBATIM COMMENTS

"I like the idea of mid rise mixed use in the area, but I'm still concerned about the addition of more townhouses in the area, when there is already such an issue with school overcrowding"

"More local shops that are all within walking distance should make for easy access as well as help support current local businesses and business owners. I know a handful of local business owners who could really use this support."

"Scaling back high rise development (limits) the ability for future generations to live in the area, keeping the 'small town character' is going to destroy the potential for those that grew up in this community to stay here as there will be less availability of units and therefore higher prices."

"As one of the fastest growing municipalities, we need to provide access to affordable higher density accommodation for the growing population and to help younger families afford to stay in the community."

"We really desperately need the transit connectivity with the B-line running right down to 16th - the transit situation is ridiculous - we actually don't have a night bus!"

"What about bicycles? Connect bike paths with others to make bike routes. As the city of Vancouver and Victoria have proven, if you build it, bikes will come."

## SURVEY RESULTS - FALL 2019

On October 29, 2019, we held our last Open House of Stage 1. The intent of this Open House was to inform participants of (1) what will be presented to Council for Stage 1 approval and (2) the next steps and opportunities for further input/changes to the plan. The goal for staff was to understand outstanding concerns and issues moving forward into the Stage 2 planning process.

The companion survey delivered in this period of engagement looped back to the "**Big Challenges**" that participants were introduced to in early 2019. Participants were asked to assess if they thought the proposed Plan would improve the outlook for Semiahmoo's future in regards to: growth, transportation, and community amenities.

*Does the plan address the housing challenges that will be faced by future generations of Semiahmoo residents?*



*Does the plan address the transportation challenges that will be faced by future generations of Semiahmoo residents?*



*Does the plan improve the community amenities for future generations of Semiahmoo residents?*



## YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS

Youth provided a seldom heard voice within land use planning. City staff felt it was important to engage this group specifically on this survey, as it was asking residents to consider their's and the plan's legacy for the next generation of Semiahmoo residents. For youth, their ability and desire to live, work, and play in Semiahmoo Town Centre over the next 30 years is directly affected by the policies and outcomes of the Town Centre Plan.

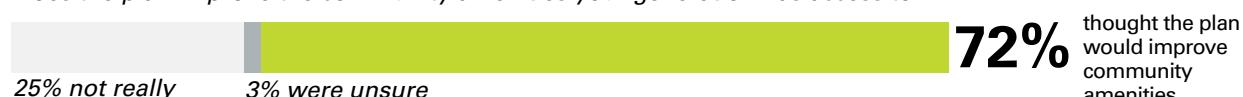
*Does the plan address the housing challenges that will be faced by your generation?*



*Does the plan address the transportation challenges that will be faced by your generation?*



*Does the plan improve the community amenities your generation has access to?*



## EXAMPLE VERBATIM COMMENTS FROM YOUTH

"I think it gives more affordable options which is really nice for the families that cant afford the beach houses or the massive houses."

"I think the plan is ambitious but very well thought out. It's seems it might be necessary to go through with it due to the increasing population in the area and it's a great plan for future growth. I encourage further development in surrey so this plan has my support."

"Keep Semiahmoo Mall. It's good enough."

"Skytrain and easy access is important to me. It is virtually impossible to go to Vancouver for a night out, responsibly speaking, without having to leave early to catch the last skytrain or bus at midnight. Cabs back are ridiculously expensive."

"Make it more affordable for our generation to live."

"Smaller therefore cheaper housing."

"I would hate to see town houses everywhere but there's no other option. The population will grow as well at the housing prices so best would be having town houses."

"More urban environment. More stores and easier access to public transportation."

# 4 Engagement Step Four

4: REFINING THE PLAN

5: COMPLETING THE PLAN

## STEP FOUR AT A GLANCE

Objectives	Methods	Outcomes
Connect directly with South Extension Area.	 2 Online Surveys	South Extension Area Land Uses were revised based on property owner feedback.
Understand community architectural character preferences and public amenity opportunities.	 Emails & Phone Calls	Survey participants provided the basis of the Urban Design Guidelines
Mitigate outstanding concerns through Urban Design Guidelines.	 Stakeholder Meetings	Semiahmoo First Nation was informed of the Plan and provided their feedback on meaningful reconciliation initiatives that could be included.
Connect with Semiahmoo First Nation.		

## SUMMER 2020 - SOUTH EXTENSION AREA SURVEY RESULTS

The Stage 1 Plan was approved in March 2020. At this time, Council and Staff noted outstanding concerns within the South Extension Area. In May 2020, owners of properties designated 'Low-Density Residential' were invited by addressed mail to participate in a survey to help us understand opinions towards preserving the existing neighbourhood character; redevelopment potential; and, petition requirements. As a result, refinements were made to the land use plan, petition requirements, and 'Low-Density Residential' designation.

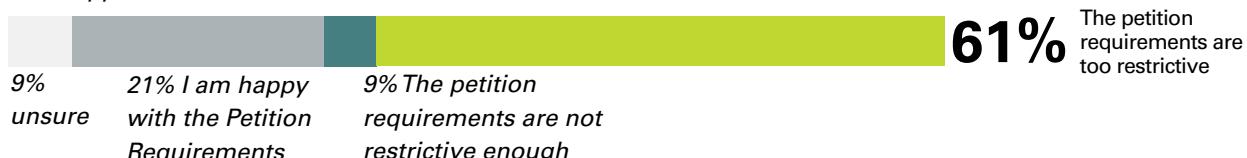
*Does preserving the existing neighbourhood character still resonate with you? Does preserving a traditional low density core reflect your vision for your neighbourhood over the next 10-20 years?*



*How do you feel about the designation of your property (Low-Density Residential)?*



*How do you feel about the petition requirements to change the plan in the future (one large petition area with 75% support)?*

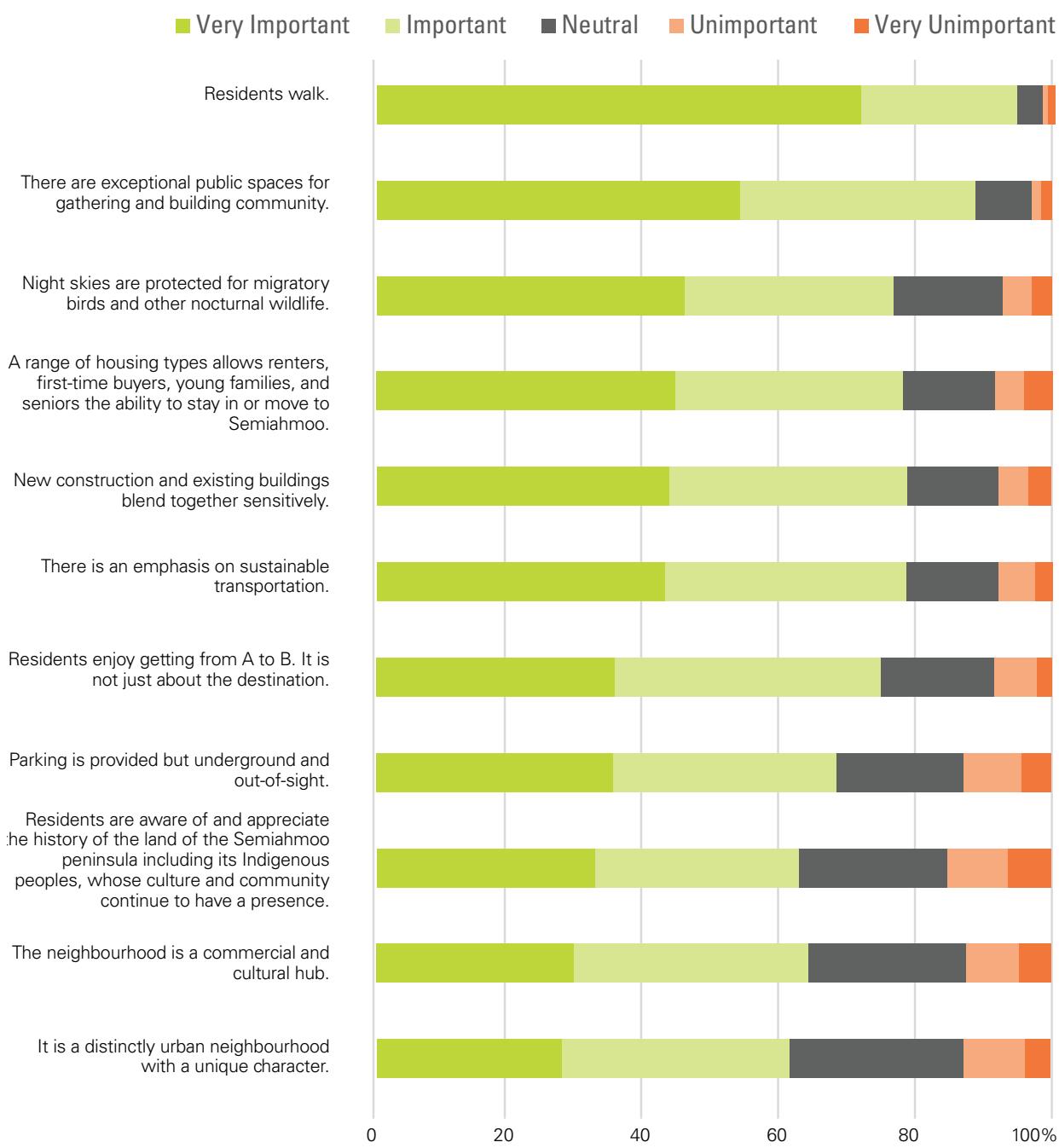


## FALL 2020 - URBAN DESIGN SURVEY RESULTS

In November 2020, the neighbourhood was surveyed on their urban design and community amenity preferences. Residents of the Plan Area and those living nearby were notified of the survey via mail. The survey was administered to City Speaks Panel residents living in South Surrey and also promoted on social media and within City of Surrey e-publications. There were 897 completed surveys. The results of this survey formed the basis of the Plan's urban design strategy.

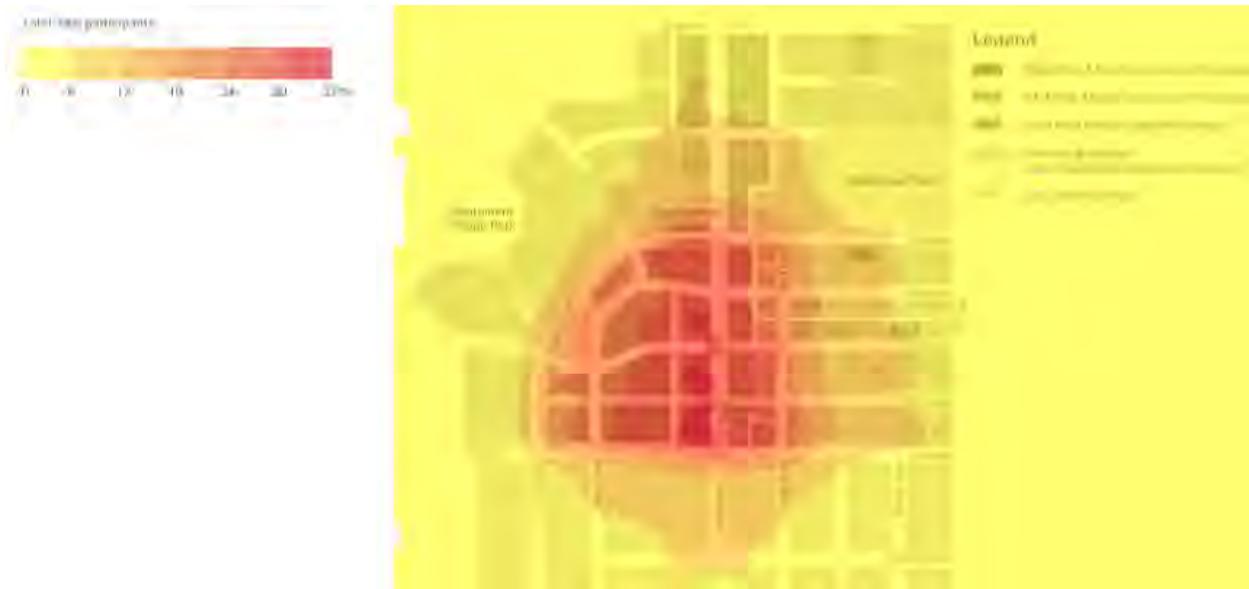
### Urban Design Principles

An urban design vision will guide the overall look and feel of the community. It will help us to determine specific guidelines and policies needed to implement the plan. We asked participants to review priorities and tell us what is most important.

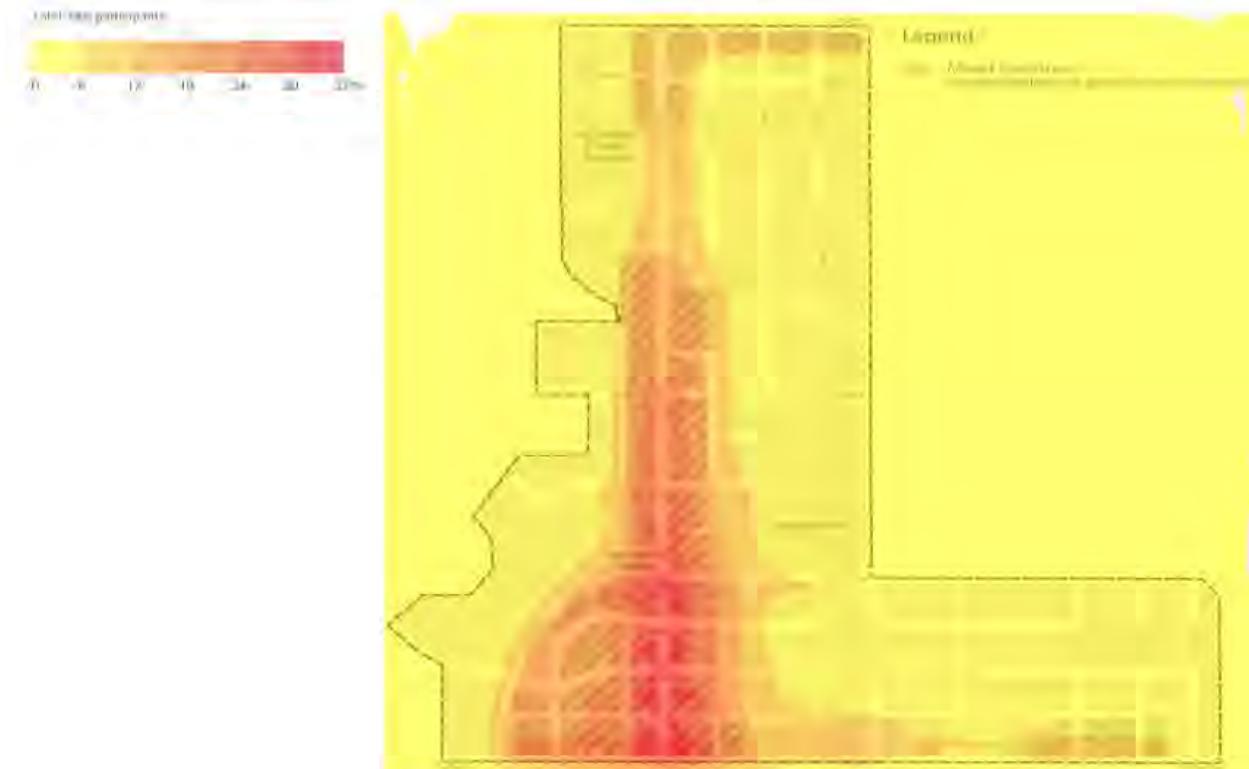


## Heat Mapping Exercises

We asked residents to participate in heat mapping exercises. The first question asked residents to highlight where they would consider the heart of Semiahmoo to be located.

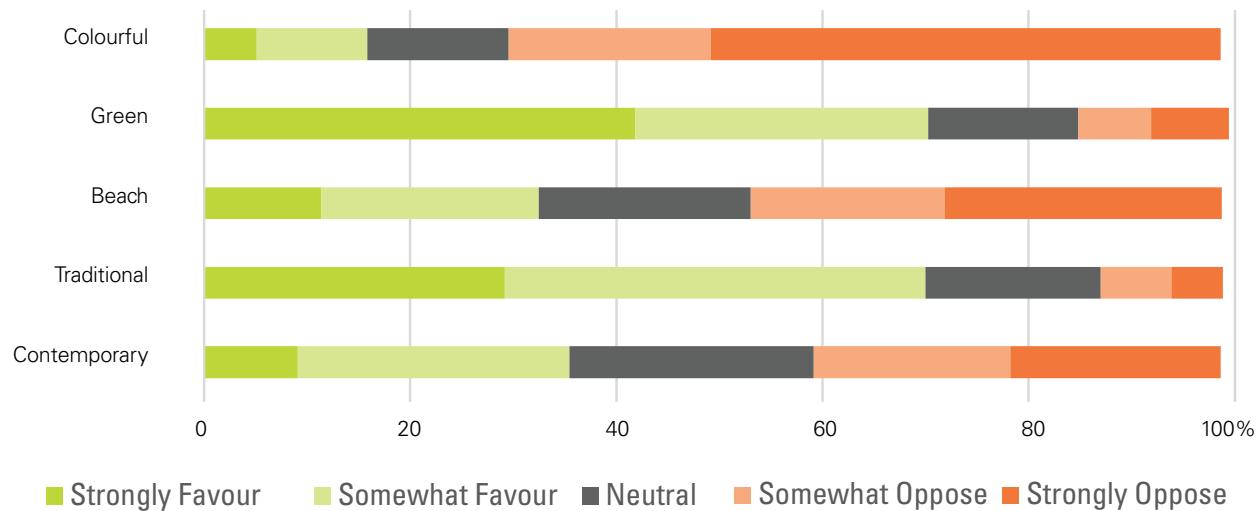


The second question asked residents where they thought the most vibrant areas should be locations - such as main shopping or high streets, or key focal points. This will help staff determine where to plan for the most active and vibrant uses such as cafes, restaurants, and retail shopping.



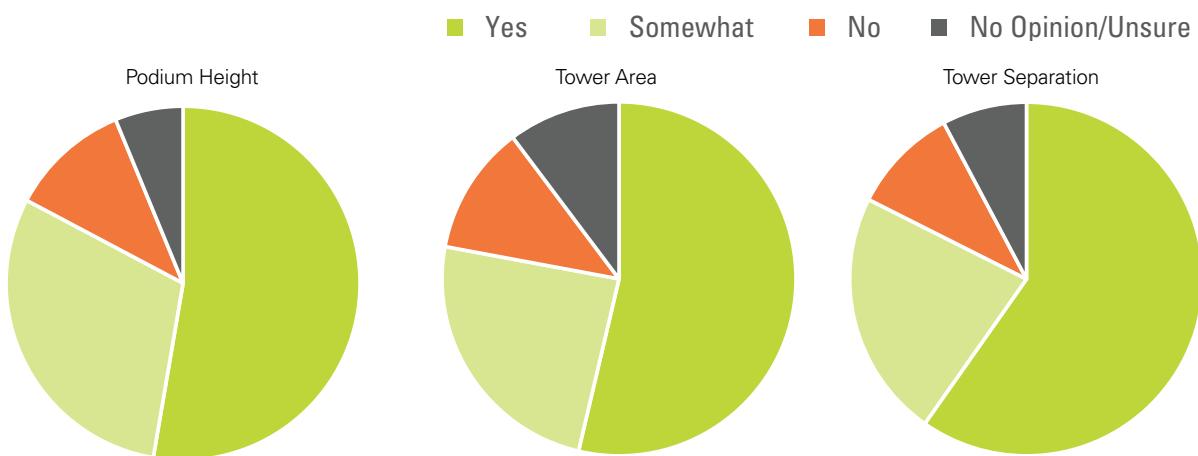
## Architectural Style Preferences

We asked participants to rate their preference for various building styles. This will help guide the overall urban design vision as well as development of specific building design guidelines.



## Interface Issues

We proposed three measures to help mitigate the impact of high-rise towers. They included: matching podium heights with adjacent low-rise buildings, limiting tower floorplate areas to create more slender towers, and creating minimum distances between towers. All three measures were supported by the majority of participants.



## Arts & Culture

Survey participants emphasized the significance of Semiahmoo First Nations art, as well as traditional ecological knowledge of local vegetation and plants be incorporated throughout the Town Centre. Participants suggested the Semiahmoo Nation be consulted.

## Parks and Open Spaces

We asked participants to consider what exists now in the neighbourhood and what types of amenities are most needed? The top three responses were: Amenities for building social connections and promoting relaxation, washroom facilities, and playgrounds and natural play features

## EXAMPLE VERBATIM COMMENTS

"Consideration of all ages. I find there is little consideration for teenagers and young adults in many public spaces."

"More independent restaurants to add character. Same with retail, small unique, classy stores, not more dollar stores and junk. Store fronts should have character and charm, not ugly boxes. Make it a high end area to increase the socioeconomic feel of the area."

"Height of buildings should not overshadow and negatively impact residences that currently exist in the town plan area."

"Emphasize and highlight the incredible natural history and present day richness of surrounding Semiahmoo Bay (one of the habitat top rated bird areas in North America, a historically rich shell fish and crab fishery,), existing forests and, the incredible array of migratory birds, the parks, trails and green infrastructure network and Biodiversity Conservation Strategy... all of which is foundational to City of Surrey vision and planning."

"Pedestrian areas designed like Italian piazzas surrounded by trees with curved pathways can act as windbreaks. These 'piazzas' can be open-fronted restaurants and small shops"

"Using aspects of green and sustainable design like living walls, planted terraces, green roofs, etc also significantly breaks up the visual experience of living alongside a 'tower'"

"Street setbacks for buildings to allow the people to be the focus rather than the buildings. A deep set back for each building will allow sidewalk and garden space for people to interact"

"Hire local artists. Murals are amazing. All art is amazing. Include the education of the history of the Semiahmoo First Nation. Build a long house so the local pow wows can be held there instead of at Earl Marriott. Support First Nations artists."

"I'd like to see more carvings, totem poles signage, more indication of First Nations."

## **SPRING 2021 - MEETING WITH SEMIAHMOO FIRST NATION**

In April 2021, Staff met with Chief Harley Chappell of the Semiahmoo First Nation. Staff shared a brief overview of the land use planning process and discussion focused on meaningful reconciliation within the scope of a land use plan. Chief Chappell provided the following take-aways that will be incorporated into the final plan document:

### **Semiahma, the People vs. Semiahmoo, the Place**

Semiahmoo Town Centre is unique in Surrey, sharing a namesake with a First Nation. However an important distinction was clarified: Semiahmoo is the name of the place, while Semiahma is the name of the people.

### **Requirement for Archaeological Assessment**

To ensure Indigenous belongings and ancestors are treated respectfully, developers should be conducting archaeological assessments to meaningfully preserve the deep history of Semiahmoo, the place and Semiahma, the people.

### **Water Quality of Semiahmoo Bay**

Semiahmoo First Nation and the City of White Rock have been working on revitalizing shellfish and fish habitat in the Semiahmoo Bay by reducing and treating stormwater run-off from urban areas. Within the Semiahmoo Town Centre, the existing Semiahmoo Mall site is the only portion of the Plan Area impacted by the Semiahmoo Bay catchment area. Currently, the Semiahmoo Mall site is approximately 97% impervious. This means that almost none of the stormwater infiltrates the ground. Instead, stormwater, oil drippings from the parking lot, and other pollutants flow off the site. The run-off makes its way down the hill into White Rock and then eventually it ends up in the Semiahmoo Bay. The Plan will introduce more permeable surfaces (greenspace) on the Semiahmoo Mall site. New standards for infiltration will also require development to retain approximately 90% of the total annual precipitation on site through the use of low impact development (LIDs) such as topsoil, rain gardens, bioswales, ponds, and green roofs.

### **Extension and revitalization of Semiahmoo Trail**

Originally a First Nation's trading route, Semiahmoo Trail traditionally connected Seattle to the North Shore. This placed Semiahmoo First Nation in an important position for trading. The Semiahma were known for their ability to communicate across a variety of different Coast Salish languages speaking a "traders language" as many different groups used this passage.

Reviewing a historical map of the First Nations route, the original Semiahmoo Trail by-passed most of the present day town centre, running along the north east corner of the Plan Area. Staff and Semiahmoo First Nation agreed, there is importance to having a contemporary presence rather than being 100% historically accurate in alignment. Extending the trail and using storyboards, public art, or other educational installations to tell the Semiahma people's story and share their culture was supported.

### **First Nations Presence in Placemaking**

Public Art and innovative infrastructure beautification (tree and sewer grates, light standards, benches, etc) can be used to bring Semiahmoo First Nation art and culture into the built environment. Any interventions and designs should be done in collaboration with Semiahmoo First Nation and with procurement of Semiahmoo First Nation artists.

Through naming, there is an opportunity to ensure First Nation's history is re-integrated throughout the town centre. This does not mean replacing existing settler names necessarily but adding First Nations names to share a fuller story. The story of Kulshan (Mt. Baker) was shared and suggested that this information could be shared more widely at a permanent installation at Bakerview Park.



# 5 Engagement Step Five

4: REFINING THE PLAN

5: COMPLETING THE PLAN

## STEP FIVE AT A GLANCE

Objectives	Methods	Outcomes
Release Plan content for public review	 1 Online Surveys	The Plan was finalized based on final feedback.
Gather outstanding concerns	 Emails & Phone Calls  Stakeholder Meetings	Staff provide response to outstanding concerns and report to Council.
	 Release of Final Plan Date TBD	

## SUMMER 2021

In July 2021, the neighbourhood was presented with a comprehensive survey showing approximately 50% of the plan content including detailed road designs for new and upgraded roads, urban design guidelines, outdoor public plazas spaces, and land use refinements such as building heights and ground floor uses.

### Building Heights

*The Stage 1 Land Use Plan for Semiahmoo (approved by Council in March 2020) identified the different densities and land uses. The detailed work in Stage 2 seeks to refine building heights while keeping within the intent of the approved Stage 1 designations. Stage 1 maximum Building Heights were determined by the designation. Stage 2 maximum Building Heights proposes increased and reduced heights on a site-by-site basis. Participants selected their preference by comparing two maps.*



### Other Themes Identified

828 verbatim comments were received. Comments generally indicated support for:

- First Nations reconciliation;
- Green development measures;
- Public plaza spaces; and,
- Road designs and improvements.

Verbatim comments indicated outstanding concerns with:

- The amount of growth the City of Surrey is experiencing;
- The need for more green space and mature trees;
- Traffic and parking in the interim as Surrey shifts to a less car dependent City; and,
- The need for more radical climate change policy.

## EXAMPLE VERBATIM COMMENTS

"I really like these plans. Well thought out and considerate to pedestrians and public transit users."

"Love the wider sidewalks and European style pedestrian area of 16A. Love the cycle lanes"

"Thank you for this clarification! It looks very desirable. One bonus I observed is the location of rest areas with seating. I find once I sit on a bench other people join me and we have a conversation! I value the opportunity to visit."

"Greater density, more building height, wider more functional street width and at grade 'hop-on hop off' electric street cars is needed."

"Shopping malls are not serving their original purpose (in the suburbs and accommodating the automobile) judging by the number of closed and repurposed stores (e.g. Zellers). With the neighbourhood population increasing it makes sense to encourage walking to shop. People living in high-rise condos / apartments with small pantries and freezers will get used to carrying small grocery bags."

"Very interesting plan that looks like it tries to address the major issues of urban development in sensitive, progressive ways. Kudos!"

"Prohibit any fossil fuel use and prioritize renewables such as geothermal for large buildings, heat pumps for homes, as well as solar, and only lastly, electricity straight from existing grid. Even economically these make sense - these are known technologies with slightly higher upfront costs but cheaper long-term. Surrey voted that we are in a climate emergency; this is not the time for half measures."

"We like the overall plan and feel it will be an vast improvement over the existing development."

"I would like to downsize from my home to a new condo or apartment unit. I am looking forward to new units being constructed and hope that this phase of the plan occurs quickly."

# FAQs & Outstanding Concerns

## THEME 1: GROWTH CONCERNS

Staff responses are shown below.

### I Why is Surrey growing?

Surrey is one of the fastest growing cities in Canada. Surrey is expected to grow by approximately 300,000 residents over the next 30 years. All of Surrey's established Town Centres are planned to grow and densify in this time.

The City does not control the demand for housing. Regardless of what we plan, people will continue to move here for jobs, family, climate, etc. All we can do is plan for the growth we predict. Our predictions say this growth is only expected to increase in the next generation with BC's strong economy, natural population changes, migration, and displaced climate refugees from other parts of BC, Canada, and elsewhere.

If we stop planning for growth, that doesn't mean growth stops. Over 1,000 new residents move to Surrey every month. Plans like the Semiahmoo Town Centre Plan help to control the housing supply to prevent homelessness from rising. They also maintain public services by projecting school capacities, public transit needs, hospital expansions, etc.

### I Semiahmoo is full. Why can't they go to Grandview, Fleetwood, Whalley, somewhere else?

Over the next 30 years, all of Surrey's urban areas will experience redevelopment and densification. The majority of Surrey's undeveloped lands are natural ecosystems, wetlands, forests, and farmland. To mitigate climate change, we need to protect these areas as much as possible. This is the primary reason why existing neighbourhoods, like Semiahmoo, need to densify.

It is also a lot more efficient to develop in existing urban areas. Existing utilities, services, transit, shops and amenities provide for new residents, and make new development more affordable. Through new development, these services and amenities can also be more easily expanded upon to help address the impacts of growth. Sprawling out into the suburbs impacts the environment more, and places a heavier burden on everyone's property taxes to service and maintain.

To put it into perspective, the Semiahmoo Town Centre Plan redevelops about 130 acres (52 hectares) of disturbed urban area (only ~40% of the Plan Area). To accommodate this growth in traditional greenfield suburban development, we would have to develop ~1200 acres (470 hectares) of watercourses, wildlife habitat, forests, and/or farmland. This is an area about 2.5 times the size of Sunnyside Acres Urban Forests and contains enough trees to capture 3120 tonnes of carbon per year.

Focusing growth and development into established urban centres maximizes the benefits of compact sustainable development, allows efficient service delivery (such as public transportation) and minimizes the development of natural areas. For these reasons, Town Centres and Frequent Transit Networks (like Semiahmoo) are one of the best places in the City to accommodate growth.

### I But why is this happening so fast?

The Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Plan has outlined Semiahmoo Town Centre as an area for growth and densification since 2011. The City of Surrey's Official Community Plan was adopted in 2013. The OCP outlines Semiahmoo Town Centre as an area for growth and densification. Significant growth has been planned for Semiahmoo for over a decade. Staff have been working on a plan for Semiahmoo Town Centre since 2011.

The Semiahmoo Town Centre Plan is a long-range plan to accommodate growth and development over the next 20-30 years. A plan doesn't mean everything will be built over night. Sometimes it takes decades for changes to occur following completion of a land use plan. Realization of the land use plan is dependent on individual property owners choosing to sell their properties to developers or redevelop their properties themselves. If there aren't willing buyer, sellers, and developers then not much will change.



## THEME 2: CLIMATE CHANGE CONCERNS

Staff responses are shown below.

### I We are in a climate emergency. Why is the City just encouraging green buildings and not requiring it?

The Province of British Columbia gives cities the ability to regulate some aspects of construction and building design. However, cities are not allowed to supersede the province-wide BC Building Code. The City of Vancouver is a special exception to this where the provincial government has allowed the creation of a Vancouver Building Code. Unfortunately, the City of Surrey does not have the same authority. We cannot create a new building code or mandate minimum standards for green development. With the climate emergency worsening, it is possible the province will eventually give the City of Surrey powers to enforce and require green building systems. Until then, we will continue to explore creative ways to strongly encourage and incentive developers to make more sustainable, environmentally friendly buildings.

### I Construction and new development will result in the loss of many mature trees.

All development requires the submission of an arborist report. A professional arborist will assess and report on the quality of trees on-site. High quality trees will be recommended for retention. Damaged, dangerous, or unhealthy trees will likely be suggested for removal. Surrey's Tree Protection By-Law requires developers to provide replacement trees at a rate of two trees for every protected tree that is removed and one tree for every cottonwood or alder tree that is removed. For every tree that is removed, there will be one or two new trees planted in its place. In addition to this, the Plan's road upgrades and landscaping requirements will see hundreds of new trees planted in boulevards, setbacks, and public plazas. As the Plan builds out, Semiahmoo will see a net increase in the number of trees in the neighbourhood. Over time these trees will grow and mature to provide improved canopy cover.

### I Houses with yards and green space are better for the environment than a concrete jungle.

Multi-family homes (row-houses or apartments) use less energy and emit less carbon pollution compared to single family homes. An older gas-heated single-detached home emits about 80-190 times more pollution than a modern electrically heated apartment. Redeveloping to replace older higher-polluting single-family homes with newer, more efficient electrically heated multi-family homes reduces household carbon emissions.

Another key component of our transition to a more sustainable city is walkable neighbourhoods with less dependence on cars. Today, only about 23 per cent of Surrey's households live within proximity of a 15 minute walk or cycling trip of their daily needs. We're focusing growth in established Town Centres and along frequent transit corridors so more people can live close to their daily needs. Density also supports more reliable and efficient public transit service, reducing the carbon and other air pollution from cars.

No one wants Semiahmoo to end up a concrete jungle. The urban design guidelines contain landscaping requirements. Roads are designed to accommodate street trees. The plan includes City purchase of properties to create 3 new public parks. Green walls and roofs will be prioritized on City-owned facilities.



## THEME 3: PLANNING CONCERNS

Staff responses are shown below.

### I When will road upgrades occur?

The majority of road upgrades will occur with redevelopment. Developers are responsible for upgrading the roads in front of their site. Where properties are marked for City purchase for road extensions, nearby developers contribute to money to the City to facilitate the lot's purchase. When the City has enough money contributed by developers, we seek to purchase the property. The City will not expropriate land for parks or local road connections. It could take many years before all of the road network upgrades are made because no one is forced to move or sell. Upgrades to arterial roads and critical connections are undertaken as part of the City's capital projects.

### I It looks great but who pays for this? Does this come at the expense of taxpayers?

The majority of the land in Semiahmoo is privately owned (not owned by the City). When a private landowner wants to redevelop their property, it is at their cost. At that time, they are also responsible for all necessary road and infrastructure upgrades. This includes plazas, landscaping, and other public realm features. On top of that, developers pay fees to the City for a variety of community amenities that the City will coordinate and build elsewhere in Semiahmoo Town Centre. These fees fund new parks, affordable housing, beautification, public art, and community centres.

### I Traffic and Parking are issues in South Surrey

The Semiahmoo Town Centre Plan will require parking at the standard City of Surrey Zoning By-Law parking rates. Two significant capital projects are expected to alleviate traffic congestion outside of the Plan Area in the short term: 24 Avenue arterial road widening and Highway 99 Interchange (2023-2025) and 20 Avenue collector road widening and Highway 99 Overpass (2023-2025).

The Semiahmoo Town Centre Plan also designates mixed-use areas, requiring ground level commercial. This will provide a greater range of neighbourhood-serving amenities and services within walking distance. Public transit improvements such as the extension of Rapid Bus along 152 Street, connecting South Surrey and Peace Arch Hospital with Newton and City Centre were also coordinated with TransLink throughout the Town Centre planning process.

### Can we just designate everything for density and ask developers deliver parks later? Those designated as Parks would prefer to sell to developers.

The land use plan's purpose is to provide certainty to residents, landowners, and developers. It is important to designate the desired sizes and locations of parks so the City can actively work to acquire them in the long-term. Relying on private development to contribute parkland is unreliable and often does not result in adequate parkland.

The locations of the new parks are the outcome of a comprehensive planning and community engagement process. The parks network was supported by the majority of participants through multiple public surveys. They are located carefully to ensure all future residents will be within a short walk of parkland, that they connect to existing pathways wherever possible and that they meet the intent of the Parks, Recreation & Culture Strategic Plan.

If your property is designated as parkland, you will not be required to move or sell to the City. The Plan will take many years to build out. As development occurs, developers make contributions to fund the City's future acquisition of parkland. When you are ready to sell, the City will seek to purchase your property at fair market value. Or, you may choose to sell to another interested buyer.

## THEME 4: PROCESS CONCERNS

Staff responses are shown below.

| Why is this plan taking so long? Our neighbourhood is in limbo with vacant and derelict properties. Just finish it so construction can begin and our neighbourhood can get cleaned up.

A normal planning process takes 2-3 years. We've been working on Semiahmoo TCP for almost 4 years now. Semiahmoo is an active and engaged community. Due to this strong resident interest, the Semiahmoo Town Centre Plan has provided many more opportunities for engagement than our typical planning process. A typical planning process will see 2-3 open houses and 2-3 surveys. In Semiahmoo we have had 2 workshops, 3 public open houses, 8 online surveys, and numerous stakeholder meetings with groups like Semiahmoo First Nation, Peace Arch Hospital Foundation, Fraser Health, City of White Rock, etc. We have also shared a great deal more detail of the final plan contents than we usually do. This includes urban design guidelines, road designs, detailed policies, and responses to FAQ and concerns.

Four years is a long time for a planning process. We realize the neighbourhood is getting fatigued with our letters and postcards. We are committed to completing the plan and presenting it to Council before the end of 2021.

| Why hasn't there been a town hall style meeting or public hearing?

The City of Surrey is not required to hold public hearings to approve land use plans. The Local Government Act 464 (1) requires public hearings for: official community plans, zoning bylaws, or early termination of land use contracts.

Open houses, workshops, and one-on-one conversations were selected as the preferred engagement events, as opposed to a town hall event. They are best practice and align with the City's engagement principles. As noted by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2), Town Hall events may:

- Create a highly emotional environment rather than productive conversations;
- Can be difficult to build an open and neutral environment for all views to be shared;
- Underrepresented those who do not feel comfortable speaking in front of a group or those who hold a minority view; and,
- Can cause divisions among neighbours by removing anonymity of private conversation.

| Why hasn't there been in-person events in Stage 2?

Much of visioning exercises and decision making are carried out in Stage 1's more extensive engagement. We start engagement in Stage 1 at a "Collaborate" level and slowly shift towards "Consult" and "Involve." With a Stage 1 Plan already approved by Council, Stage 2 is driven by technical analysis of engineering, architecture, and economics to determine how to implement the plan Council has approved. Inherently there is less room for feedback, because we already have an approved plan. Although COVID-19 public health measures limited our ability to gather in-person, we have striven to keep residents involved throughout Stage 2 with three surveys and release of much of the Plan's content for review.

| What's next?

City of Surrey staff are drafting the plan. We are committed to completing the plan and presenting it to Council before the end of 2021. After the plan is approved, residents will be notified of nearby Development Applications. Council votes to approve each individual development application. Residents can attend public information meetings and public hearings to voice their concerns on a project-by-project basis.

The Semiahmoo Town Centre Plan will likely be reviewed and updated again in 10-15 years.